

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE

**June 27, 2007
1:30 p.m., MST**

The Arizona English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force met in Room 1 of the Arizona Senate Building, 1700 W. Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. MST.

1. Call to Order

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman

Dr. John Baracy

Mr. Jim DiCello

Dr. Eugene Garcia

Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan

Ms. Johanna Haver

Ms. Eileen Klein

Ms. Karen Merritt

Absent:

Ms. Anna Rosas

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

Chairman Alan Maguire opened the meeting by reviewing the June 14th Task Force meeting. Mr. Maguire's summarized:

On June 14, 2007, the Task Force met to review the draft models and discussed all amendments submitted by Task Force members. As amendments were discussed, Task Force members made decisions either by consensus or formal vote. Several amendments were incorporated into the draft models. At the end of the meeting, the Task Force voted to submit the amended draft models to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the State Board of Education, and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) for review. Arizona Revised Statute 15-756.01.F requires at least 30 days for review before formal adoption.

Mr. Maguire stated that he had been in contact with the Governor's Office, the State Senate, and JLBC to check if they had any questions. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee is planning to meet on or around July 19, and it is hoped that JLBC will have comments for the Task Force to consider. Mr. Maguire stated that he was not sure if the Task Force would be required to have a second 30 day review period if major changes from the reviewing entities were incorporated into the SEI models. He said that probably major changes, not minor ones, would create a second 30 day review.

Dr. Eugene Garcia made a statement regarding the June 14, 2007 Task Force meeting that he was unable to attend. Dr. Garcia stated that he had been under the impression that, during the June 14, 2007 meeting, the draft document would be discussed and amended, but not adopted or submitted for review. He raised a procedural question regarding this procedure and stated that, as a public body, in his opinion, he believed that any modification to the document required a public hearing process. He also commented that he had been unable to see or comment on the amended draft document. As a board member of other committees, Dr. Garcia stated he had never modified and taken action upon a document at the same meeting. He stated that by acting on a document before allowing all Task Force members to review the document, a procedural error had been made, and the Task Force needed to have this procedure reviewed by legal personnel. Dr. Garcia emphasized that Arizona's Open Meeting law must be followed. He questioned the Chairman's authority to submit the amended draft document to the reviewing entities. Dr. Garcia stated that before the Task Force could proceed, this issue needed to be resolved.

Mr. Maguire stated that a motion at the end of the June 14, 2007 meeting was made for the Chairman to submit the amended draft SEI models document to the list of recipients, and the passing of this motion granted him the authority on behalf of the Task Force.

Dr. Garcia stated that at a State Board or other committee, once a document is modified, there needed to be a hearing for review before the document is adopted. He conceded that this procedure might not be required of the Task Force, but he still wanted legal counsel to verify the protocol. Dr. Garcia said that if there has been a procedural error, the amended draft document must be recalled. Mr. Maguire stated that he had followed the classic amendment procedure used in state Task Force committees. Dr. Garcia repeated his request for legal review. Mr. Maguire stated he would arrange for an executive session for this review. Dr. Garcia questioned whether the submittal letter had a date printed on it. Mr. Maguire stated that the submittal letter had June 20, 2007 printed on it. Dr. Garcia stated that his copy had no such date on it. He said he received this copy with the agenda. Mr. Maguire stated that the revised copy was sent separately and contained the date on the first line. Dr. Garcia noted the document was, in fact, dated June 20, 2007.

Dr. Garcia asked that until the executive session convenes, and the possible procedural issue is resolved, no further actions on the draft models take place. He requested that the Chairman contact the State Board of Education and the other reviewing entities and inform them of the procedural claim. Mr. Maguire said he would not consent to this request, but he noted Dr. Garcia's request. Mr. Maguire stated he believed the motion at the end of the June 14, 2007 meeting was very clear. He stated that there was no dispute to the language of the motion. The motion was made and seconded and opened to discussion. There was no discussion of the motion. There was no indication that any Task Force member was unclear about the intent of the motion, or any action beyond the scope of the motion. Dr. Garcia argued that regardless of the motion, if the law does not allow such a motion, such a motion cannot be made.

Dr. Garcia also had a second question. He recommended a 60 to 90 day hearing period that would generate input from the field regarding the revised draft model. Dr. Garcia asked if the Task Force decided it was not necessary to have input from the field. Mr. Maguire responded that he did not think that statement was made by any of the Task Force members. Mr. Maguire stated that he expected one of the purposes of the current meeting would be to take input and recommendations. He said that the agenda was kept short so that there would be sufficient time to hear from the education community during the call to the public. Dr. Garcia made a motion that the Task Force begin a process that would allow a 90-day period to hear from the field specific to the model paper that Task Force has essentially put forward. Dr. John Baracy seconded the motion.

Mr. Maguire was open to hearing from the field but was reluctant to put a specific time period to this activity. Dr. Baracy stated that over nine months have been spent on the activity of the draft models, and in the course of that time, there was a meeting held in Tucson which allowed testimony from that part of the state. He expressed that the main task of getting together an initial draft to react to had been completed, and that it would be beneficial to not only hold a hearing meeting in the Phoenix area, but also a hearing meeting in the Tucson area to hear feedback. This time of year for educators is a period of suspense, so he did not see where the time period would be a problem. Mr. Maguire commented that if he had known where they would be in the process, he would have held today's meeting in Tucson. Mr. Maguire was concerned with time, but open to the concept of input.

Mr. Jim DiCello stated that he could not support a delay in implementation of the models. He said that he thought the Task Force should adopt the models after the JLBC meets, do it in July, and if that 90-day period is going to hold up the adoption of these models, he would not vote for the motion. Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan stated that she had been receiving inquiries from the field since last September seeking guidance about what the four hours of ELD looks like, and she was concerned about prolonging the process. She said that as a task force, the group should be responsible for getting something out to the field before school starts. If the Task Force goes with the 90-day comment period, schools are well into their upcoming school year. If the comment period means prolonging the process, Ms. Garcia Dugan also would not vote for the motion. Dr. Garcia said that nothing precluded districts and schools from implementing the models now, and that he wanted to hear from the field about the models.

Ms. Eileen Klein apologized for arriving late at the meeting and asked which agenda item the Task Force was working under with this motion and an update. Mr. Maguire stated this discussion was falling under Call to Order with some overlap into discussion of future meetings (Agenda item 5) and reviewed the motion. Mr. DiCello said he would be open to receiving comments for the full 90 days, but that this should not in any way delay or interfere with the adoption of the draft model after the JLBC meets. He stated that the Task Force needs to adopt the model in July as soon as possible. He would not vote for a motion requiring otherwise. Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan added that she has heard numerous testimony from the field requesting guidance and an expectation that the model would have been completed back in December. She commented that the Task Force needs to give guidance to the field on what the four hours look

like. The longer the Task Force delays and waffles on what ELD means for ELLs, the longer the Task Force is dismissing the practitioners. As a Task Force, they are responsible to get something out to the field before school starts, which is less than a month away for some districts. If they listen to testimony for 90 days, that takes the Task Force into the school year and delays implementation of the model for another school year. If the motion leads to this, Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that she will not vote for it. She stated that the model should be adopted and implemented.

Dr. Garcia thought it was appropriate for the Task Force to hear comment before implementing the new model. Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that in 2000 a Task Force had believed they had created an ELL program and yet they are back now in 2007 trying to create another one as the prior programs have not worked. She expressed that they already have heard testimony, that the law is the law, and that the meaning of teaching ELD has now been defined and agreed upon. Mr. Maguire commented that the Task Force has a number of tasks before them, including the budget form which is very important and critical to the success to whatever model is adopted as it addresses the cost of implementing such a model. The budget form cannot be adopted until the model is adopted. This is a sequential process. Also before the Task Force is training and implementation. This is going to take some time, and all of those meetings concentrating on those tasks are open for the field to make statements and feedback. His concern is putting an arbitrary number on the hearings and pushing back Task Force activities.

Dr. Garcia stated he would be willing to go halfway on the time frame. Mr. Maguire stated that they already have the 30 day period built in and they are having trouble scheduling meetings in the summer. Dr. Garcia suggested an open hearing in Phoenix and Tucson in August while the Task Force moves ahead with their actions. Dr. Baracy stated that it sounded like Dr. Garcia was trimming his motion from a 90-day process to a 60-day process and that he would withdraw his second to allow this amendment to the motion. Mr. DiCello emphasized that the draft model needs to be adopted and that feedback can still be heard to modify the model in the future. Dr. Garcia asked if the model was adopted during the June 14, 2007 meeting. Mr. Maguire stated that it was not adopted and could not be adopted until after the 30 day review process. There had to be a consensus of the panel on a submitted draft before beginning the 30 day review and then after that period, the model can be adopted. Mr. DiCello's motion was specifically targeted to a submittal document that could be reviewed before adoption.

Mr. Maguire asked if Dr. Garcia would be content to move forward with developing a budget form and implementation plans and also hold hearings in Phoenix and Tucson to hear feedback at the same time. Dr. Garcia said he would be happy if the Task Force hears feedback before adopting the model. Mr. Maguire said the main problem was that the budget form cannot be adopted until after the model is adopted. Dr. Garcia stated his intent was to get analysis and feedback from the field before adoption of the model. Ms. Klein said that the law indicates that the document is a living document which will continually be monitored and modified according to need, which explains the long tenure of the Task Force members. She expressed that there would be more than ample opportunity for feedback from the field. Dr. Garcia stated this was a different practice than taking feedback before adoption.

Dr. Baracy stated he was hearing only a difference of about thirty days between Dr. Garcia's timeline and the normal activities of the Task Force, and perhaps even less. As a compromise he recommended having testimony before mid-August so that the model could be adopted prior to the school year. Mr. Maguire suggested that if the Task Force is comfortable going forward, doing upcoming work on the SEI budget form and other tasks at the same time that public outreach and public hearings are occurring, he would be OK with that solution. Mr. Maguire was concerned about getting quorums at the public hearings in August, but suggested having field hearings, which solicit input, do not take action, and do not have to have regular quorums.

Ms. Karen Merritt asked for clarification on what documents would be submitted for feedback. She asked in specific about the research document. She asked if changes would be made based on the feedback. Mr. Maguire answered that the draft models went to a list of several people, all of whom could share it with practitioners, and that the draft would soon be on the website as well. ADE staff confirmed that the revised draft models dated June 20, 2007 was already on the ADE website for public perusal. The revised draft model would be the only document up for review. Ms. Garcia Dugan reiterated that the Task Force needs to follow the law and adopt the model as soon as possible so that implementation can begin, and that if they delay things another thirty days, implementation for this school year will be impossible. Things can be changed later, as Ms. Klein stated. Delaying things another year sends the wrong message. Dr. Baracy stated that the law couldn't be met because the law stated by December 1st, 2006 and that date has already passed.

Dr. Garcia stated he would be content with the hearing meetings the first week of August as suggested by Mr. Maguire. Ms. Johanna Haver expressed concern that the feedback would be mainly negative because this is a new approach to ELD instruction. She commented it would be more beneficial to have the model in use for a while before hearing feedback. Dr. Garcia said it was important to hear the input, whether or not it was negative. Ms. Haver said she did not see the benefit of hearing further feedback. Mr. Maguire stated that he has received positive as well as negative feedback from members of the field that he has spoken with (representing only himself and not the Task Force.) He welcomes those comments. They've raised questions that he has brought to the Task Force that he would not have been aware of otherwise.

Mr. Maguire paraphrased the motion that called for at least two public hearings, one in Phoenix and one in Tucson to hear public testimony which would not require a quorum to be present, and that in the meantime the Task Force will move forward with the tasks of the budget form and implementation plans based on the current form of the models during that period of time. The two week difference between these hearings and the earliest possible date of adoption is not significant after the long delay in getting to this point. Ms. Haver asked if testimony could be directed more towards implementation than what the field doesn't like about the model. Mr. Maguire stated that it was his experience that many of the questions were of a practical nature and often implemented related. Mr. DiCello commented that such questions could not be addressed in such a public hearing. Mr. Maguire agreed, saying that while questions could not be answered, they could be considered in future meetings and addressed, and that if there were an implementation plan by the time of the public hearing, this could also be explained.

Ms. Haver asked about the procedure to answer questions. Public testimony under the Open Meeting law is strict in that only after the hearing can questions be addressed. Ms. Merritt commented that there has been public testimony all along, and that the law also allows districts to submit their own models for the Task Force to review. She was concerned that clarification on the funding not be delayed.

Mr. Maguire stated he was not hearing consensus. Dr. Garcia asked that there be a vote. Ms. Merritt asked for clarification if the Task Force would moved forward with the model as well as holding public hearings. Dr. Garcia replied that activities such as budget form would move forward at the same time as the hearings. Ms. Merritt asked for a clarification on the wording of the motion. Dr. Baracy asked when the Task Force will vote on the revised draft model. Mr. Maguire stated that the earliest possible date would be July 20th, and that there was no quorum yet for a meeting in July. He was attempting to schedule something for the end of July. Dr. Baracy stated that the time requested by Dr. Garcia was workable and the Task Force could give the field opportunity for feedback and schedule the vote shortly after.

Ms. Haver asked then if the adoption would take place in August. Mr. Maguire replied that yes, the adoption of the model would probably take place in August. Dr. Garcia stated that the letter needed to be reviewed by at least one body. Mr. Maguire stated that the law required a review by JLBC. The law specifically calls for submission of the model for review by JLBC for 30 days prior to adoption. If JLBC meets before the 30 days and reviews the document, that follows the law, and even if they don't, by having the 30 day review period, the law is still followed. This is a semantics issue as the JLBC is scheduled to meet July 19th which is within the 30 day period. Mr. Maguire would appreciate comments coming from any of the other parties reviewing the document. Ms. Merritt asked if a draft form of the budget form is available at the time of the public hearings if it could also be submitted for review. Mr. Maguire replied that yes, the budget form should also be discussed and adopted in a public meeting. Once that is adopted it is part of the public record and open to feedback.

Chairman Maguire restated the current form of the motion: "To hold public hearings in Phoenix and Tucson, in the interim proceed to develop the SEI budget forms and the form of implementation based upon the models approved for submission at our June 14th meeting."

Mr. Maguire asked the Task Force members if they understood the motion on the table. There was no dissent. Dr. Baracy seconded the amended motion, and the motion was opened for any further discussion. Dr. Baracy voted aye, Mr. DiCello voted nay and explained his vote that while he was not adverse to any public feedback, he wanted the model and the funding out to the field as quickly as possible. Ms. Garcia Dugan voted no and reiterated what Mr. DiCello stated. Dr. Garcia voted aye. Ms. Haver voted no. Ms. Klein voted yes. Ms. Merritt voted yes. Ms. Anna Rosas was absent. Mr. Maguire voted yes. The motion was passed with five votes for, three against, and one member absent.

Dr. Baracy requested that the staff check the materials we received for the models. He asked staff to review the audio tape concerning the discussion on class size. He had submitted an amendment that was not approved by the Task Force. He remembered the Task Force approving the language on page five from line 1 through 3 where the period ends, but not the rest of that segment.

2. Approval of April 12, 2007 and April 26, 2007 minutes of Task Force meetings

Mr. Alan Maguire held this agenda item to the next Task Force meeting.

3. Presentation and Discussion of Research Supporting English Language Learner Model Components

Mr. Kevin Clark stated his purpose today was to discuss the latest incarnation of the Research Supporting English Language Learner Components. The revised statute stated that the Task Force would adopt research-based models. This document shows the research supporting the components of the draft model. This has been a generative process; as Task Members requested research, staff members searched for specific items. Mr. Clark presented the handout (Attachment A) and discussed it. Item 1 was research on the state of ELL research. Mr. Clark stated that there has been very little research on this subject. He called attention to the last paragraph in Section 1 that indicated a recent survey of teachers found a great deal of confusion in the field on the definitions of ELD, the Gersten and Baker study (2000a).

In Section 2, Mr. Clark briefly discussed the time-on-task research; he stated that all of the research was related to general study and none targeted ELLs in a four-hour block. Research on this topic, however, extends back to 1963, and also includes meta studies, including Borg in 1980.

In Section 3, Mr. Clark discussed research on the teaching of discrete English language skills in a particular order and included a meta-analysis from DeKeyser in 2005 that combined data from children and adults to determine total variance in ESL functor order that can be accounted for by a combination of five factors including perceptual salience. Perceptual salience is the frequency that a student hears a language skill and how it affects his or her ability with that skill. Dr. Eugene Garcia asked if these were studies on native English speakers and normal development studies. Mr. Clark agreed that they were studies on how children learn language, but that they were not all native English speakers. Mr. Clark replied there was a cross linguistic study of adults learning a second language. In 1974, Bailey, Madden, and Krashen found that ELL adults and children had similar results. The particular order of categories had been discussed in weighting certain skills according to their prevalence in the ELL Proficiency Standards and is addressed in the Larsen-Freeman study.

In Section 4, the Berliner review found that there was wide variation among teachers for both content and time allocation decisions. Again, studies on ELLs were virtually nonexistent, but there was a 2006 study by Saunders, Foorman, and Carlson which analyzed instructional practices and time allocations. ELL students in a separate block configuration had modest but significantly higher English oral language and literacy scores on the Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery.

Dr. Garcia asked if the document was being accepted or acted upon as he had not had a chance to review the research document. He asked that the research document be reviewed by other researchers in the field to see if it was an adequate review. He observed there was long-standing data but less recent data. Ms. Eileen Klein asked before any actions were made that Mr. Clark finish his presentation as it was useful for those not familiar with research reviews.

Mr. Clark continued to Section 5, research on the explicit teaching of discrete English language skills. There are two distinctly different camps in this field, but as this particular literature review examines supportive research only, he offered Ellis (2002) and his evidence that the frequency with which a subject is taught relates to how well that skill is learned. This especially applies to complex language structures. Teachers who focused on grammar enabled students to have a better grasp of the English language.

Section 6 dealt with the explicit teaching of phonology. Research showed a link between ability to hear sound to the speed of acquiring the syntax of the English language.

Section 7 addressed the question of time allocation for oral language skills. The emphasis in the research is on academic oral proficiency, which is included in the Arizona ELL Proficiency Standards. In the Catts, Hogan, and Adolf (2005) study, increasingly over time, oral proficiency predicts variance in the reading skills.

Section 8 was focused on research supporting the explicit teaching of verb tenses. Dr. Garcia commented that instruction of verb tenses was not necessarily linked to proficiency in a school context. Ms. Johanna Haver disagreed, stating that teachers should teach verb tenses discretely and intensely, and that in her experience this made a great deal of difference in language proficiency. The main difference between her instruction and the other ELL classrooms was the discrete and intense teaching of verb tenses and syntax. Dr. Garcia commented that she was an effective teacher and that it was not necessarily verb tenses. Ms. Haver expressed that testimony from the students themselves pointed to syntax. She stated when research doesn't fit what she has experienced, she has to discount it.

Section 9 listed research addressing the explicit teaching of word order, which relates to reading ability and comprehension. The results of a 2006 study indicate that teaching word order to first graders helps their reading comprehension.

Section 10 addressed explicit teaching of vocabulary, about which there was little dissent. Some operant studies were included that supported specific teaching of vocabulary.

The last section addressed class size, which is a multi-variant phenomenon; it is very difficult to determine the operant variable which was manipulated. The data included in Mr. Clark's report includes a very robust 1989 study as well as more current studies. There were no studies targeting ELLs specifically. Almost every researcher noted that just because class size changed, student achievement did not necessarily change.

Dr. Garcia noted that there was no research on teacher preparation, particularly SEI teacher preparation, in the literature review. He requested information on research covering how training affected instruction. Mr. Clark cautioned that it would be difficult to disentangle the training received by teachers from the training the Task Force plans to provide for the model, and to identify the variables of how teacher training affects student achievement. If the research question was tightened up, he would be happy to search for supporting research. Dr. Garcia clarified the research question, asking for research on how formal credentials and professional development is related to instruction and student achievement. A broader category would be assessment on professional development, such as Title One studies. Mr. Clark reminded Dr. Garcia that always he prefers concentrating on studies including ELLs.

Dr. Garcia requested a peer review to see if this is the best research on these topics. Mr. Clark stated that this was not intended to be a comprehensive review but merely a search for supporting research. Mr. Maguire stated this was a part of public record which was open for comment, but he did not believe it required peer review as it was not a document to be acted upon but merely a supporting tool. He invited Dr. Garcia to have some of his colleagues review the document. Dr. Garcia stated he would do so. Ms. Haver noted that Dr. Long who wrote a book discussing problems in SLA noted that the biggest problem with research is the inability for researchers to agree upon anything. Dr. Garcia stated Ms. Haver could have Dr. Long review the document. He wanted the document to be reviewed so that the Task Force could say they were well informed on the research.

4. Discussion of Classroom Groupings based Structured English Immersion Models based on the June 14, 2007 version

Mr. Alan Maguire stated that the topic of classroom groupings had arisen in several discussions in previous Task Force meetings. He asked Aha! Inc. to prepare an example of how classroom groupings will work in the draft model, to explain this complicated process, and to try to simplify it for the Task Force members' understanding. This is an example of how by following the principles of the law, very different outcomes can be reached based on schools' numbers of ELLs by proficiency level.

Dr. Suzy Seibert introduced the document, "SEI Models Selection Process at the School Level." (Attachment B). She stated that the primary grouping determinant was the ELL proficiency level, along with the ELL grade level, particularly at the elementary school levels. Pre-Emergent and Emergent ELLs are combined because of the challenge of teaching only Pre-Emergent

ELLs, and Pre-Emergent ELLs benefit from their exposure to Emergent students. The first model, A, is preferred. It is a grouping of ELLs by overall proficiency level within a grade. The second model, B, is a grouping by proficiency band within a grade. The third, and least preferred model, C, is a grouping by proficiency band within a grade band. If there are sufficient ELLs in a school, the preferred grouping method is to separate them by proficiency levels and to provide homogenous groupings of students.

The first question considered was the target size of each grouping. The target size for Pre-emergent/Emergent groups was 20 ELL students; the maximum class size was set at 23. ELLs in the Basic group were the swing group; ELLs with Basic proficiency can be combined in classes with Pre-emergent/Emergent or with Intermediate ELLs. As long as there is one Pre-emergent or Emergent student in an ELD classroom, the target size remains 20.

Dr. Seibert discussed the multi-step Elementary School Method, which was adding the number of Pre-Emergent/Emergent students in a grade and dividing by 20. Remainders were examined to determine if they could be added to existing classrooms or if an additional classroom would be required. Then, the number of Intermediate ELLs was evaluated. Finally, the number of Basic ELLs was evaluated, and decisions on whether Basic students should be mixed with other levels was made. A smaller, more homogenous classroom was preferred over a larger, more heterogeneous classroom.

Dr. Seibert looked at real numbers from a K-8 school. She discussed the Kindergarten numbers. Kindergarten is a special grade because these students cannot be combined with other grade levels. In the example Dr. Seibert used, there were 28 Pre-Emergent and Emergent, 72 Basics, and 63 Intermediate ELL students. Two small classes of 14 were created for Pre-Emergent and Emergent, while Basic and Intermediate were combined to create 5 classrooms of 27 students each for the maximum cost efficiency.

Mr. Jim DiCello asked how many sections were normally at that particular school. Dr. Seibert replied that she would need to go back to the data to find the school name again and research the answer. Dr. Eugene Garcia asked what the mobility rate was for that school. Dr. Seibert replied she would need to get that information from ADE. Dr. Garcia was concerned about the complexity of the method especially with the added challenges of mobility. Mr. Maguire stated that this was one of the strengths of the AZELLA proficiency results because AZELLA records will follow ELLs who move around the state, and the schools will be able to place them correctly at any school. Dr. Garcia asked if classes are changed as students come and go. Dr. Seibert replied that districts' current class-forming strategies could be used as they presently are by districts, and that student mobility is a systemic problem in education. Dr. Garcia agreed but pointed out that rather than looking merely at grades, now proficiencies must be factored in. Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan replied that the master schedule is always fluid and that in secondary school in particular, teachers are moved around as needed. Sometimes a section needed to be reduced or added, and the ELL groupings will merely be another part of the ongoing adjustments to the schools' master schedules. Mr. DiCello stated that if mobility was occurring within a district, teachers could be moved to different schools. This has been done by schools before.

Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that her district created different math classrooms according to math proficiency.

Ms. Karen Merritt asked when the class formation would take place. School districts typically create their classrooms in the spring for the following year. This would not pose a problem for returning students, but might be problematic for predicting new ELL students. Ms. Merritt also suggested that in the case of having 14 Pre-Emergent and Emergent students, it might make sense sometimes to take a few lower Basic students to round out the class size. Mr. Maguire stated that the primary focus is to narrow the range of proficiencies in a classroom to assist the teacher. Ms. Merritt stated that the methodology is for calculating class size, and once the basic classes have been calculated, the district could modify them according to their needs. Dr. John Baracy asked why numbers are first rounded down. Dr. Seibert replied that in one instance she initially rounded up and then discovered she could round down and result in fewer classrooms in the interest of cost efficiency. In Kindergarten this is apparent; there would have been 3 groups of 24 in Basic and 3 groups of 21 in Intermediate for six classrooms, but by combining them, five classrooms of 27 were created. Dr. Baracy again requested the verbiage of the amendment to the June 20, 2007 draft model document regarding class size, in particular maximum and target sizes. Mr. Maguire stated that a sentence had been added regarding maximum class sizes. Dr. Baracy requested that the amendment to add that sentence be verified, as he recalled the maximum pertaining to maximum class sizes for the school or district.

Dr. Seibert addressed the question about composite proficiency scores; she stated that sometimes a small point difference can change whether an ELL student is Emergent or Basic, for example. There is a great deal of flexibility in the arranging of classrooms based on AZELLA scores; if AZELLA scores are examined, low Basics could be combined with Pre-Emergent and Emergent, or very high Basic with Intermediate, etc. Ms. Merritt asked if once classrooms were created if they would remain the same throughout the school year regardless of student progress within that classroom. Ms. Garcia Dugan agreed, and added that a mid-year AZELLA could be given if a school wanted the option of moving students to other classrooms at that time. This would be more likely in a secondary school setting. Teachers are already trained in differentiated instruction which would come into use as students progress at varying paces.

Dr. Garcia stated that differentiated instruction could take place at any point in the school year, and that by grouping ELL students by proficiency they are constrained to that classroom. Mr. Maguire stated that this happens in all classrooms regardless of subject. Ms. Merritt stated there is nothing preventing teachers from reassessing students or moving them. Dr. Garcia asked if there was a clause in the draft model document regarding this. Ms. Merritt stated that there was, in particular the mid-year assessment. Dr. Garcia asked if the model can allow teachers to make their own assessment. Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that AZELLA must be the assessment for moving students, as the past system of teacher recommendation did not work. Dr. Garcia asked if the AZELLA could be taken at any time. Ms. Garcia Dugan replied it can be taken three times in a year: at the beginning, mid-year, and at the end of the school year. Dr. Garcia expressed a concern that this would be an administrative nightmare. Ms. Garcia Dugan expressed otherwise, that this is the first time homogenous groupings would be used, which should greatly benefit

instruction. Ms. Haver stated in her experience she had not seen a great number of exceptions of students needing to be moved around between classrooms in a school year. Dr. Garcia stated his experience with newcomers indicated otherwise.

Ms. Cindy Turner commented that the Arizona ELL Proficiency Standards has a great deal of range and flexibility built into them. Within any proficiency standard, there is a range of opportunity for growth without having to move to a different classroom. This is also a skill continuum, so changing classes would break that continuum. Students can develop skill in any proficiency standard at their own pace.

Ms. Merritt stated that she could not see any reason a teacher would hold back a student for anything other than social reasons, such as might occur in kindergarten. She stated that she thought the class building methodology would work. Dr. Garcia stated he believed the methodology relied too much on mathematics and not on student learning. Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that there was a lot of experience with our administrators with moving students.

5. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities

Mr. Alan Maguire discussed the July availability dates and expressed concern that there were only a few times in the month when a bare quorum could be present. He will attempt to pick a few dates for meetings. It would make sense to have a meeting after the 30 day review is completed in order to discuss implementation.

Before the call to the public, Dr. Garcia asked that his concerns regarding the document submitted be noted in the minutes. He asked if there were any provisions regarding a minority model. Mr. Maguire stated that there were no such provisions; the model would be from a majority vote. Dr. Garcia stated that he did not consider the draft model as a model but as a paper submitted, as he had not been present to vote on the submittal, and that he would have voted no regarding such a motion to submit the draft.

6. Call to the Public

Mr. Alan Maguire made a call to the public at 4:05 pm. Ms. Jennifer Daily with the Arizona Educators Association spoke on behalf of 34,000 teachers and education support professionals across the state. They have a resolution committee to state their guiding principles regarding ELL education. The first priority and guiding principle is that all stakeholders must be involved in language acquisition program development and implementation. The second principle is that accepted research and education must guide ELL program development. The third principle is that programs that completely segregate students by language ability rather than integrating English and non-English speaking students whenever possible are inherently discriminatory. The fourth principle is that programs must offer necessary English language instruction at the

proper level. The fifth principle is that schools and districts must be provided sufficient resources to implement programs successfully.

Ms. Daily stated that she wanted to put forth some concerns about the draft model and that she would arrange for teachers to speak during the public hearings. As the cost models are developed for the model, she asked that they fully implement what the cost of these programs will be. Programs have been historically underfunded in the past, which has led to the Flores case. She asked that the Task Force keep in mind the tasks at the district and school level for ELL staff who have so many duties already and not enough time to teach. The decision making process for teachers, schools, and districts has eroded with AIMS, NCLB, and other programs and laws. The two year funding request being litigated through the Flores case is a concern because ELL students attain proficiency at different rates. She requested a further look at AZELLA, in particular getting assessment results in a timely fashion. Four hours is the time mandated by statute for ELD, but she requested some flexibility in the models rather than minute to minute mandates. One ELL Kindergarten teacher commented that if she takes away the time for lunch, group time, and specials, the time left minus the four hours for ELD leaves only 50 minutes for any other academic content. Ms. Daily expressed that she does not want segregated classrooms at the students' expense. Her group is grateful for the time to look at what has been put on paper and that it will be valuable to have the public hearing. She hopes that the Task Force focuses more on outcomes and less on the inputs, letting districts determine the inputs. She thanked the Task Force for their time and efforts.

Ms. Heather M. Wilson, Phoenix Union High School District, spoke next, commenting that she appreciated having access to the handouts discussed during the meeting. She asked for clarification on one issue—she had instructed teachers not to comment on the model as they were awaiting the revised version and wondered which version was on the ADE website. Mr. Maguire stated the June 20, 2007 version was on the website. Ms. Wilson then commented that there seems to be confusion about the implementation of the model. As Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan had said, schools are eager to start, but she had been under the impression that there needed to be training on discrete skills instruction before teachers could implement the new model. If that is the case, they may need to wait for implementation until after the training sessions have been given to teachers. Mr. Maguire stated that these issues would be discussed in future meetings.

7. Discussion of future meetings

This agenda item was covered in Agenda Item 5 above. Chairman Maguire will contact Task Force members regarding future dates of meetings.

8. Adjournment

ELL Task Force

June 27, 2007

Page 14

The meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m. The motion for adjournment was made by Mr. Jim DiCello and seconded by Ms. Karen Merritt.

Arizona ELL Task Force

Alan Maguire, Chairman

October 10, 2007